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17 October 1963



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

*USSR-Berlin: [S]oviet detention of a British convoy at both ends of the Berlin autobahn on 16 October apparently reflects an intention to continue the harassment of Western access as a means of building pressure for early negotiations.]

[S]oviet authorities are now seeking to impose new procedures for checking Allied convoys. They almost certainly expect the US to reject these demands. They may have calculated, however, that British convoys might grant minor concessions which would strengthen Moscow's bargaining position vis-à-vis the US. In any event, the USSR probably believes that disclosure of differences between US and British convoy procedures will tend to underscore the need for negotiations to remove "misunderstandings".]

[M]oscow presumably intends to maintain close control over these harassments in order to avoid irreparable damage to the detente atmosphere. The Soviet leaders, however, appear to be operating on the assumption that the US and Britain also have an interest in preserving this atmosphere and that this situation affords the USSR greater latitude for maneuvers to draw the West into a new round of Berlin talks.]

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Britain: [The Conservative Party hierarchy is urgently sounding party opinion on a new prime minister, but is encountering difficulties because all of the leading contenders have serious deficiencies from one point of view or another]

[No decision is likely before the end of the week, at the earliest]

[Deputy Prime Minister Butler is strongly opposed by the right wing, [redacted]]

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[redacted] Lord Hailsham's fitness for the post has been generally questioned, and the US Embassy considers it unlikely he could be chosen without splitting the party]

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[redacted] [Lord Home seems the man best able to command the support of almost all sections of the party, but lacks experience both in handling economic and administrative problems and in practical politics]

[Among the other possibilities, Chancellor of the Exchequer Maudling has lost ground [redacted]]

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[redacted] at the party conference in Blackpool, whereas party cochairman Iain Macleod's powers of inspirational appeal showed to advantage there]

[The embassy considers Lord Privy Seal Edward Heath, now chief foreign affairs spokesman in the House of Commons, as a "very dark horse" but believes he would probably be foreign secretary if Lord Home is selected for prime minister]

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Poland: Increased tension in Poland over the regime's antichurch actions has led to violence whose suppression required the use of army troops.

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[redacted]
[redacted] local police in the southeast border city of Przemysl were driven back twice by a mob resisting closure of a Roman Catholic school last week before troops successfully stormed the building. During August, armored cars equipped with tear gas had to be used for the seizure of a Capuchin novice in Nove Miasto.

The incidents arose in the wake of nationwide closings during this year of seminaries, convents, monasteries, and the few remaining parochial schools. The regime has been attempting in this way to break the power of religious orders, which it considers the core of the church's resistance.

The Polish people already are restive over price rises and the threats of winter food and fuel shortages. Although the regime will have little trouble controlling further demonstrations, the strong reaction of the people on the religious issue reflects the thin veneer of the Polish population's tolerance for its Communist rulers.

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Yugoslavia - Latin America - Nonaligned States:

Members of Tito's entourage consider that his recent visits to Brazil, Chile, and Bolivia were failures,

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They were extremely pleased by his reception in Mexico, however, apparently because of the considerably larger public turnout. Tito reportedly caused some consternation among delegates from the non-aligned states at the UN by his remarks in Latin America that the concept of blocs and nonaligned states has been superseded by a new division of the world into states working for "peaceful coexistence" and those against it.

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DAILY BRIEF

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